

"A word or a smile is often enough to put fresh life in a despondent soul."

— Thérèse de Lisieux



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National Triennial Mass



Maureen Mayers

The Mass was held in the Cathedral of St. John the Evangelist, Salford on Saturday 25 April 2015. The Mass was attended by the National President's family and over 500 members and guests. It was concelebrated by The Rt. Rev. John Arnold, Bishop of Salford, Bishop Terence Brain, Bishop Emeritus, Canon McBride, Frs. Stephen Parkinson, John Williams, Leo Heakin, David Irwin, Michael Murray and David Potter. The National Banner was carried to the sanctuary by the National Vice Presidents Valerie Ward and Sheila Godley. The readers were Angela Higginson National Treasurer, Irene Mitchell National Secretary and the Gospel was read by Canon McBride. The gifts were carried by grass root members from the Liverpool Archdiocese in the Offertory Procession.

At this Mass the National President Maureen Mayers presented Pauline Allan with a cheque for £14,000 which had been raised by members for the charity 'Let the Children Live'. Before the final hymn the National President Maureen Mayers was presented with the Bene Merenti award by Bishop Emeritus Terence Brain.

Sheila Godley

Bishop Arnold's Address

For those members who were unable to attend the Triennial Mass, here is a transcript of Bishop Arnold's address.

Today is the feast of St. Mark. We have heard a rather important passage, from that final chapter of St. Mark's Gospel. Where Jesus is saying to his disciples "Go out to the whole world and proclaim the Good News".

But what is important is that we recognise that Jesus is saying it right at the end of the Gospel of St. Mark, after all that has happened there in the Gospel of St. Mark, because it has not been a pretty story.

If I were ever to write anything about the Gospel of Mark I think I would title it "The Gospel of St. Mark, a Gospel of failure?" because so much has gone wrong.

Almost everybody else has rejected Jesus in the Gospel of St. Mark. The scribes, the Pharisees, the elders and the crowds who have gone off when they finished being interested in the miracles he was presenting. And the disciples, Oh dear, almost wherever you look in the gospel the disciples get it wrong.

They do not understand the parables. Jesus starts teaching the crowds in parables and then almost immediately after the first parable, the one about the sower, that everybody else seems to have understood the disciples come up and ask what was the meaning of that parable?

Jesus says "Did you not understand that parable, then how will you understand any of the parables? That was the easy one. There will be forty-two more like that". Then just after that Mark writes Jesus will only teach the crowd in parables so far as they are capable of understanding him. He then goes on to say Jesus takes the disciples on one side and explains to them everything he has been saying to the crowds. They were not picking it up bless them.

Then all those arguments between themselves. James and John - Boanerges - sons of thunder. They must have been fun to be with. They were the ones who dared to come up to Jesus and say actually, "We would like to be the most important, can we go one on your right and one on your left".

Then there is Peter, always the one to assume he is going to answer any question that Jesus places and he usually gets it wrong. And when it comes to that moment of testing. Do they really love the Lord? Do they want that strength of friendship?

When in that moment Jesus is challenged like the rest they all run away. It is not just Judas who betrays the Lord. It is not just Peter who denies even knowing him three times. They've all gone. It really looks like a bit of a disaster.

There is however a gospel within the gospel and frankly ladies it is down to you. It is the women of the gospel. They seem to understand what Jesus is all about. They are the ones who recognise that he is the Messiah. They are the ones who come along and follow him and provide for his needs and they acknowledge him for his passion. They are there to see the resurrection. Yes, there is something going on but unfortunately the people who were supposed



Bishop Arnold

to be picking up the story were missing the point.

Yet, here we are at the end of the gospel and Jesus is saying go out to the whole world. You might not have listened or understood. You might not have seen what I was doing. You might have been very slow to understand what it means for me to be the Messiah but now, having just reproached them for their obstinacy and incredulity - not the best school report - he says go out to the whole world.

And let's be grateful that Mark writes his gospel in that way because it encourages all of us in the society in which we live, in the secular world where so many things are not as they should be, there is still the command to go out to the whole world. I am with you. I am not sending you out on your own. I want to be there when you are making your decisions when you are about your ministry your apostolate. It does not matter that things have not gone right before. We are going to make them right. We are going to stand for what is true and good, right and just, right now.

Which is why the UCM is so important. What you do. What you stand for in this increasingly secular age. You stand for marriage, for family life, the security of children growing into their future. There are so many good things you are about. You are proclaiming the good news in a world, which actually does not want to listen at the moment, but it will because if our world goes in its secular direction people will understand it does not get us anywhere. We have to come back to the true news. We have to reform our society. We have to look at where God is asking us to be.

So, let's give thanks for all that the UCM is and has been. Let's look to the future because you are still as strong as ever and the witness you give so important in the world in which we live. Let's carry with us that phrase that demand, that invitation from Jesus in almost his final words in the gospel of St. Mark. Go out to the whole world, proclaim the good news. That is what you are doing and with the grace of God we continue to do together.

25 April 2015

From the National President

Dear members,

Hello and welcome to my first column for The Catholic Mother newspaper. I would firstly like to thank everyone who sent Masses, cards, emails, flowers and good wishes on my inauguration as National President. For those who do not know me, I am Val Ward and am from the Diocese of Shrewsbury. In my UCM life, I have served as Parish President, Diocesan Secretary, Editor of The Catholic Mother newspaper and National Vice President. Along the way I have met and been inspired by many officers and members at all levels within the organisation. I would like to offer my thanks to them for their friendship, advice, prayers and encouragement.



Val with her new granddaughter Petra May

In my working life I worked for the local electricity company for over twenty years in a variety of posts and finally for the last ten years as Network Performance Analyst. I took early retirement six years ago and seem to have been busier than ever!

I live on The Wirral Peninsular with my husband John and we have two sons, two daughters and nine young grandchildren. I am active in my Parish church of The Holy Apostles and Martyrs and am on the Diocesan Commission for Justice and Peace. If I have any spare time I enjoy reading, photography and walking.

Since my inauguration in May I have visited Scotland UCM for their National Council and AGM, attended the National Board of Catholic Women's AGM with Public Service Officer Mrs Maureen Hurst, where we witnessed UCM International Officer Mrs Maureen Meacher inaugurated as the new President. I attended, with National Secretary Mrs Irene Mitchell, a reception given by the Papal Nuncio Archbishop Antonio Mennini in Westminster Cathedral Hall, and have just returned from The UCM Pilgrimage to Walsingham.

It was our 70th Pilgrimage and the first for Bishop Alan Williams as our Ecclesiastical Advisor. It was also the first time that the Mass from Walsingham was live-streamed and it can be viewed on their website. The new Rector of the Shrine, Monsignor John Armitage, told us all of the plans in place to build more accommodation, a retreat centre and update the accommodation already there. We had mixed weather, however it remained dry, even sunny, for the main silent procession.

As a reminder of our 70th Pilgrimage to Walsingham we were presented with a certificate for our intentions in a Novena of Masses to be celebrated at the Shrine. It was a complete surprise to us all and we were delighted to accept. There will be full details of the Pilgrimage in the next issue of the newspaper. On your behalf I would like to thank the National Walsingham Committee for all their hard work in organising these two days of prayer and thank you to the Diocesan committees who organise travel and accommodation for their foundations.

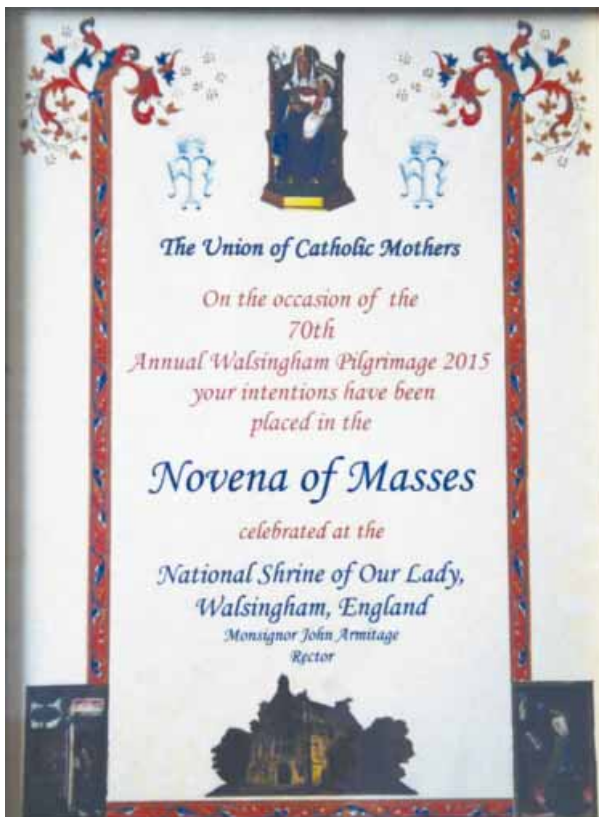
In the very near future we will have our new website up and running and it will be developed as we go along.

The holidays are now approaching us and the schools will soon be closed for the summer. I wish you all a wonderful time with the people you love whether you stay at home, fly off to exotic places or something in-between!

Take care and God Bless

Kindest Regards

Val



Certificate presented to the UCM at Walsingham 2015

WESTMINSTER



Feltham retreat

Retreat at St Lawrence's Church

The Feltham Foundation arranged their Annual Retreat day in May, held in the Parish Centre. Hounslow UCM were invited and altogether 20 members enjoyed a day of spiritual renewal. In the morning Sister Katherine (the first person on the left seated in the front row), the Parish Sister, gave a very uplifting talk. The afternoon was time for the Rosary, Litany of Our Lady and some thoughts from writings by Pope Francis. Fr Chris Vipers gave Benediction. All who attended agreed it had been an enjoyable and successful day.

Thank you

Canon Kevin Mortimer, UCM Chaplain for the Diocese of Clifton, died on 14 May after a brave fight against Motor Neurone disease. He is fondly remembered, not only by Diocesan members, but members throughout the country whom he met regularly at the annual Pilgrimage to Walsingham. Sixty priests concelebrated his Requiem Mass with Bishop Declan at Clifton Cathedral. Monsignor Leyden in his homily spoke of a gentle and

humble priest who was so loved, evidenced by the attendance of over 600, which included representatives from all of the parishes he had served in during his 47 years' ministry, and many UCM members. Canon Kevin's twin brother Patrick wishes to thank Diocesan Councils, foundations and individual members for their cards, Mass offerings and letters of condolence. May he Rest in Peace.

Eternal rest grant unto them O Lord

Arundel and Brighton

Joan CARTHAY, Haywards Heath Foundation

Birmingham

Molly EVANS, Corpus Christi Foundation, Wolverhampton

Clifton

Fr Kevin MORTIMER, past Diocesan Spiritual Adviser, brother-in-law of Mary Mortimer, Sacred Heart Foundation, Bristol
Jim SMALL, husband of Joan, independent member

East Anglia

Derek NEWTON, husband of the late Philomena, Our Lady & St Walstan, Costessey

Hallam

Martin ASHWORTH, son of Carole, Holy Rood Foundation Barnsley

Leeds

Keith HAYWOOD, husband of Bernadette, Holy Redeemer Foundation, Huddersfield

Liverpool

Kathleen WILLIAMS, Holy Rosary Foundation
Sue BENNETT, St Benet's Foundation
Marie JONES, All Saints Foundation
Pat ARMORGIE, Blessed Sacrament Foundation
Bridie PRENDERGAST, St Margaret Mary's Foundation

Middlesbrough

Elizabeth MCCABE, Holy Name of Mary Foundation
Margaret MORGAN, Holy Name of Mary Foundation
Pearl GOMES, past member Holy Name of Mary Foundation
Frances Mary GRANT, St Mary's Foundation Filey
Patricia GROVES, English Martyrs Foundation York
Mildred TAYLOR, St Aelred's Foundation York
Leo WILSON, husband of Betty, St Aelred's Foundation York

Nottingham

Edna STANYARD, Holy Cross Foundation, Whitwick
Jean Barbara CARROLL, Our Lady of Good Counsel Foundation, Leicester
Teresa OWEN, St Mary's Foundation, South Wigston
Margaret PASCALL, St Mary's Foundation, Loughborough
Bridgeen KING, Holy Spirit Foundation, West Bridgford

Portsmouth

Rhoda FLOWER, Past President, St James Foundation Reading
Deacon David MORGAN, husband of Anne, St Swithun's Foundation Yately

Salford

Michelle MCPHEE, Guardian Angels Foundation, Bury
Winifred HALPIN of St. Joseph's Foundation, Longsight
Ann FLEMING, St Mary's Foundation, Denton
Shirley and George GANSS, St Mary's Foundation, Denton

Shrewsbury

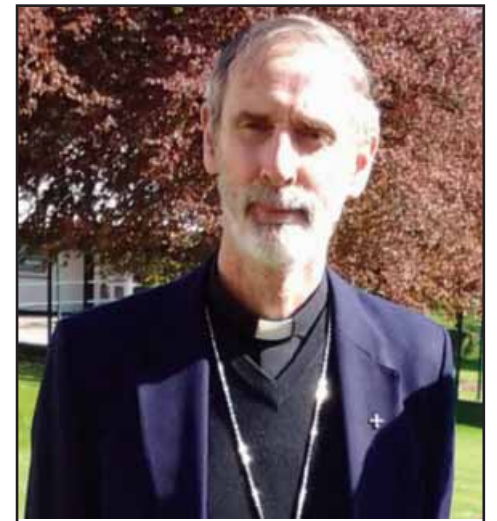
Jean PIGGOTT, St Joseph's Foundation Malpas
Gertrude MURPHY, St Mary's Foundation Dukinfield

Southwark

Gay O'CONNELL sister-in-law of Rita O'CONNELL, St Joseph's Foundation, New Malden
Tom BURKE, brother of Mary O'Driscoll, St Joseph's Foundation, New Malden
Rose MARSH, Norbury Foundation
Mary SAVAGE, President, Norbury Foundation
Edna GRAHAM, Norbury Foundation
Daphnée WILKINSON, Tolworth Foundation
Evelyn LAGRUE, Hythe Foundation
Agnes MADUJIBEYA, Past President Lewisham Foundation
Fiona KNIGHT, joint President, West Kingsdown Foundation
Pamela BOLT, Westgate Foundation
Catherine LINDSAY, sister of Mary Short, St Joseph's Foundation New Malden



Past National Presidents Joan Gettins (left) and Maureen Mayers (right) with Bishop Brain



Bishop Alan's Column

After many years of welcoming the UCM National Pilgrimage to Walsingham I was delighted to be asked to be your Liaison Bishop following the retirement of Bishop Terence Brain.

Bishop Terence accompanied the Walsingham Pilgrimage first as an auxiliary Bishop of Birmingham and then as the Bishop of Salford. He has chosen to remain in Salford Diocese and I wish him many blessings for the future and, of course, a very much quieter life. Salford is my own Diocese [I was born in Oldham] but during my time in the Marist Fathers I have worked in half a dozen English dioceses but, oddly enough, never in Walsingham.

I look forward to working with you over the coming years and meeting old friends and new. I could only manage a brief appearance at this year's National Council but as my diary calms down after a hectic first year as a Bishop I hope to see more of you.

The spirituality of Walsingham centres on Mary's fiat to Almighty God. Her complete openness to the Will of God led to the Incarnation- "The Word became flesh and dwelt amongst us". We also know that from the very beginnings family life had its problems for Jesus, Mary and Joseph. The struggle to find shelter in Bethlehem was a prelude to a difficult flight into Egypt before they eventually settled down back in Galilee.

Many members of the UCM know at first hand about the stresses and strains of modern family life. As mothers, grandmothers or aunts your support and example within your own families has never been needed more.

The world has suddenly become a very small place as our younger family members live and work in overseas locations that would have been unheard of a generation ago. The prayers and loving example of the UCM continue to be a support to so many, near and far.

Please remember me in your prayers and I will certainly remember all members of the UCM in my prayers. God bless,

+Alan

Bishop Brain – in appreciation

Some interesting coincidences of Bishop Brain's tenure as our Ecclesiastical Adviser.

Two days after our return from Mrs Gettins' Pilgrimage to Lourdes in 1993 Bishop Kevin O'Connor, our Ecclesiastical Adviser, died unexpectedly. We waited patiently to see who would be appointed in his place and then we heard it would be Bishop Terence Brain, Auxiliary in Birmingham Diocese.

The first Council he joined us at was held in Stockport in the spring of 1994, the home diocese of Mrs. Gettins and her last Council. From then on Salford was to play a major role in his life. In 1997 he was appointed Bishop of Salford and a group of us were privileged to be at his enthronement.

During his 20 years as our Advisor he was served by 8 National Presidents, 5 National Treasurers and 5 National Secretaries. Apart from attending our annual Pilgrimage to Walsingham, he also travelled with us on Pilgrimage to the Holy Land, Oberammergau, Santiago de Compostela, Rome, Knock, Lourdes and Fatima.

The strangest co-incidence of all lies yet again in Salford. His first President was Mrs. Joan Gettins of Salford Diocese and then history repeated itself as his last President was Mrs Maureen Mayers also of Salford Diocese.

Thank you Bishop Brain, you served us well - we were privileged and grateful for your years with us.

Pat Durrant, Past National Secretary

LEEDS

Birthday Celebrations

Ethel Murray celebrated her 90th birthday in June. Ethel has been a member of the UCM for over 60 years and still regularly attends our weekly meeting. She keeps us in order I can tell you! She takes an active part in all our functions, both charitable and social. We showed our appreciation for all she does by giving her a small party which she really appreciated.

Margaret Vickers celebrated her 80th birthday in July. Margaret joined many years ago and only left when she moved to Lincolnshire with her husband, Stan. After he died, Margaret moved back to Ossett and the first thing she did was re-join the UCM. She said she had really missed us and we certainly had missed her. Margaret has a great sense of humour and, in spite of being in constant pain from a back problem, keeps us amused. She also insists on helping when we organise events even if all she can manage is to take money! To show our appreciation we had a small party for her which she loved and we hope she continues for many more years.

Pam Watkins, President St Ignatius Ossett



A Blooming Great Tea Party

A Blooming Great Tea Party

In June, the members of St Ignatius foundation Ossett, held a "Blooming Great Tea Party" to raise money for the Marie Curie nurses. We are fortunate to have made friends with members of other churches in Ossett through celebrating the Women's World Day of Prayer and many of these came along to support us. We served cakes, scones and strawberries and cream. Altogether about 40 people attended the party and we raised £304 for this very worthy cause.

Pam Watkins, President St Ignatius Ossett

Leeds Diocese and Peru

Over 50 years ago, after hearing about the difficult lives the people of Peru were leading, Leeds Diocese decided to try to help. Several priests and religious volunteered to travel to Lima (the capital of Peru) to set up

a mission. The mission has flourished thanks to the generosity of the Catholics of West Yorkshire.

Naturally the UCM has played an important role in fundraising and a long standing UCM member Shirley Poland served as the Peru representative for many years.

At our Diocesan quarterly meeting Rev Jonathan Hart came to give us an insight to life in Lima. Fr Jonathan has returned from Peru after volunteering there for five years. He is now a Parish Priest in Leeds but keeps a close eye on the mission he served so faithfully.

His aim is to help young people in Lima and the surrounding parishes stay in education and he showed us photos and letters from students helped by our donations. He explained that huge amounts of money are not needed, just a steady trickle every month to help them with living expenses and travel costs. This is because many universities in Peru are free and the young people live very frugally.

The Peru commission is organising a sponsored walk at the end of June and a few UCM members are determined to complete it. We wish good luck to them.

Eileen Goodwin, Media Officer

Congratulations to All



June and Bernard Steer

Diamond Wedding
June and Bernard STEER, Holy Spirit Foundation West Bridgford, Nottingham Diocese

Golden Wedding
Linda & Richard POSKITT, St Michaels Foundation Knottingley, Leeds Diocese
Patricia and Stewart CRADDY, Sacred Heart Foundation, Westbury-on-Trym, Clifton Diocese
Marian and Bill BRETT, Guardian Angels Foundation Bury, Salford Diocese
Pauline and Mike TERRY, Guardian Angels Foundation Bury, Salford Diocese
Pat and Ray GRANT, Guardian Angels Foundation Bury, Salford Diocese
Joyce and Anthony POTTER, Our Lady & St Walstan Foundation Costessey, East Anglia Diocese
Wyn and Dave WRIGHT, St Anne's Foundation Ormskirk, Liverpool Archdiocese
Margaret and Phil MASON, St Edmund of Canterbury Foundation, Liverpool Archdiocese
Margaret and Michael HOLMES, St Ambrose's Foundation Kidderminster, Birmingham Archdiocese
Anne and David MUNSLOW, St Peter's Foundation Scarborough, Middlesbrough Diocese

Ruby Wedding
Patricia and Robin HEATH, St Michaels Foundation Knottingley, Leeds Diocese

90th birthday
Ethel MURRAY, St Ignatius Foundation Ossett, Leeds Diocese
Noreen GOSS, Exmouth Foundation, Plymouth Diocese

Betty RICKARDS, West Norwood Foundation, Southwark Diocese
Mary HOLDENESS, St Mary's Foundation Denton, Salford Diocese
Olive DEAKENSON, St Mary's Foundation Denton, Salford Diocese
Patty REAGAN, St Edmund of Canterbury Foundation, Liverpool Archdiocese

80th birthday
Elizabeth MILNES, St Michaels Foundation Knottingley, Leeds Diocese
Mary MACATEER, St Michaels Foundation Knottingley, Leeds Diocese
Eileen SYMONS, St Michaels Foundation Knottingley, Leeds Diocese
Winnie MORAN, St Michaels Foundation Knottingley, Leeds Diocese
Margaret VICKERS, St Ignatius Foundation Ossett, Leeds Diocese
Mary THOMAS, Exmouth Foundation, Plymouth Diocese
Joyce GREENHALGH, Guardian Angels Foundation Bury, Salford Diocese
Mary JAMES, Guardian Angels Foundation Bury, Salford Diocese
Margaret WALTON, Guardian Angels Foundation Bury, Salford Diocese
Margaret EMBLEY, St Annes Foundation Ormskirk, Liverpool Archdiocese
Win EHLEN, St Margaret Mary's Foundation, Liverpool Archdiocese
Eileen STORRAR, Founder member St Joseph's Foundation Malpas, Shrewsbury Diocese
Kath BORTHWICK, Dereham Foundation, East Anglia Diocese

ARUNDEL AND BRIGHTON



L to R Christine Hughes, Terri Coombs, Fr David Goddard (seated), Judy Harkins

Annual Pilgrimage to West Grinstead

We had a beautiful day for our Annual Pilgrimage to the Shrine of Our Lady of Consolation, West Grinstead. Several foundations were able to come and we were also joined by two ladies from Mothers' Union and one lady from CWL.

Holy Mass was celebrated by Father David Goddard, Custodian of the Shrine. At the end of Mass our President had a surprise for one of our members. Mrs Terri Coombs was asked to come up on the altar to receive her 50 years certificate and a lovely bouquet of flowers.

Judy said "Terri has been in the UCM for 50 years officially – although I gather she was a babe in arms when her mum first took her along. She eventually joined as an adult at age 20 and has done all the officers' roles in her foundation, served as Diocesan Secretary, National Secretary and National Vice President. We very much appreciate the knowledge and wisdom she has acquired and I have been fortunate that Terri lives near me as I have had to phone her for advice on several occasions. Terri has a great love for UCM and we at Arundel and Brighton wish to thank her for all her work on our behalf over the years".

After lunch we gathered in the Rosary Way for the Glorious Mysteries of the Rosary and ended the day with Benediction in the Church.

Rosemary Tierney, Diocesan Media Officer

Centenerian is a New Member for Haywards Heath

Fr Vladimir Nikiforov enrolled Marjorie Kinne as a member of the UCM. Marjorie is a young 104 year old with 3 daughters; 6 grand daughters and 9 great granddaughters. Asked why it took her so long to join the UCM this is what she had to say:

"When I was first married we only went to Mass on Sundays. We moved to Mayfield, Sussex where we brought up our family. Our three daughters went to the Convent School. There was no UCM but I helped in the Sacristy. When the girls left home I drifted away from the church but my husband was more faithful. Now and then we went to St Paul's in Haywards Heath and after my husband died, 25 years ago, I felt God calling me back.

I missed the fellowship and joined the Senior Citizens where I heard talk of the UCM but I felt I had nothing to give at my age. I prayed very hard and felt I should join the UCM".

Jean Martindale

AGM

President Mrs Judy Harkins welcomed everyone to the Annual General Meeting. Our guests were from Portsmouth Diocese, Southwark Archdiocese and Westminster Archdiocese.

Three of our Officers had been to the National Study Day and their reports reflected the theme of the conference. We were encouraged by Joan Hodge, Deputy President/Acting Welfare Officer, to study the documents which Liverpool Archdiocese had produced on 'The Call, The Journey and The Mission'.

Holy Mass was celebrated at Mid-day in the Cathedral of Our Lady and St Philip Howard by the Rev Canon Tom Treherne. Father Tom thanked the UCM for praying for vocations to the Priesthood.

Our speaker in the afternoon was Mrs Katherine Bergin, Diocesan Marriage and Family Life Adviser who gave a presentation on the role of grandparents in passing on the faith. Pilgrimages to Walsingham on the Feast of St Joachim and St Anne (parents of Our Lady and Grandparents of Jesus) have been made annually since 26 July 2003. Katherine gave us all a prayer card which had been especially composed for the Catholic Grandparents Association in 2008 by His Holiness Pope Benedict XVI. The Association helps Grandparents transmit the Faith and keeps prayer at the heart of the family.

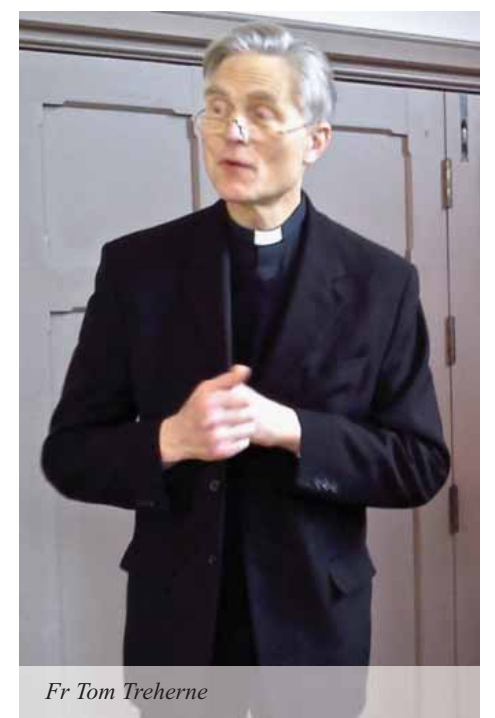
Katherine also spoke about the questions for the Synod 'The Vocation and Mission of the Family in the Church and in the Contemporary World' found in 'The Call, The Journey and The Mission', copies of which were available at the meeting for the Foundations.

Sadly Fr David Goddard has stepped down as our Spiritual Adviser and, hopefully, a new appointment will be made as soon as our new Bishop is installed. Mrs Harkins ended the meeting with the Grandparent's prayer.

Rosemary Tierney,
Diocesan Media Officer



Katherine Bergin



Fr Tom Treherne

Evangelii Gaudium: Compassion and Mercy in Mental Health

The Mental Well Being: Listening with Compassion Conference was attended by Mrs Brigid Hegarty, National Welfare Officer. Bishop Richard Moth of Arundel & Brighton Diocese was the chair and also the first speaker. Bishop Moth is the appointed Bishop with responsibility for the Mental Health Project set up by the Bishops Conference of England & Wales and also their representative for Prisons. The Project was established to help increase spiritual and pastoral support for those with mental illness, their families and carers.

Bishop Richard has kindly give his permission for his talk to be reprinted here. Part 2 will appear in the next issue of The Catholic Mother and the full talk with footnotes is available on request from catholic.mother@yahoo.co.uk.

Introductory Remarks

In 2014, I was asked to give a Retreat for those interested in Mental Health Pastoral Care – and welcome to Douai Abbey. When first asked to give that retreat, I suggested that the Encyclical Evangelii Gaudium of Pope Francis might be a suitable theme. When I first made the suggestion, the document was very new and, as I prepared the talks for the retreat I soon discovered that the words “Mental Health” do not appear in the letter. However, I also discovered that the document had much to say on the subject and I reflected that Gospel Joy is at the heart of Health in every sense, perhaps most especially Mental Health. The search – and, God-willing, the discovery – of the Joy that is found in the Gospel is THE answer to the challenges faced by so many.

The road is not an easy one and we will all know those for whom an inauthentic religious experience contributes to difficulties in mental health. So, discernment is needed too – to enable people to distinguish that which is true from that which is false. When Truth is found, then we find the Way to Life – and Jesus speaks of Himself as all three: “I am the Way, the Truth and Life. No one can come to the Father except through me.” So, we are on a journey to the Life in which we find our Joy, a life that is “Life to the full.”

Evangelii Gaudium

Let us, then, take a look at this Encyclical Letter from Pope Francis, which begins with the words:

“The Joy of the Gospel fills the hearts and lives of all who encounter Jesus. Those who accept his offer of salvation are set free from sin, sorrow, inner emptiness and loneliness.”

The Holy Father’s concern here is with the encounter with Christ. It is an invitation we are called to accept. When we do, it is liberating. For those struggling with mental health difficulties of all kinds, sorrow, inner emptiness, loneliness and – very often – real difficulties with their understanding of sin – are all too real. So, this document has, at first glance, something to say to us.

In order to hear the offer of salvation to which Pope Francis refers at the outset of his Encyclical we must have open ears. Saint Benedict speaks about this at the beginning of his Rule, with the following words:

“Listen carefully, my Son, to the master’s instructions, and attend to them with the ear of your heart.”

There are two things that we should think about here. The first is our own disposition. Is the ear of my heart inclined towards the Lord who invites me? Secondly, for those in our care, how can we facilitate their listening to the One



Brigid Hegarty

who is Life? How can we enable them to hear the message of Gospel Joy that will transform their lives and lead them out of loneliness, emptiness and sorrow, to that Life that is whole, a Life that is lived in the love that exists in the Trinity?

For us to be the bearers of the Good News to those who live with challenges in Mental Health, a real understanding of what “Joy” really is will be vital.

Joy

What does the word “Joy” mean? A dictionary gives us “vivid emotion of pleasure, gladness” and, as a second definition “rejoice, gladden”. The word comes from the Latin gaudere. “Gladness” is, perhaps, the closer definition for our purposes, but I still feel that this is not quite right. Joy, in the Christian sense, is something a little different. We must ask ourselves what is the ‘ground’ of our joy.

Bernard Häring, the Moral Theologian, writes of Joy:

“Joy, rather than happiness, is the goal of life, for joy is the emotion which accompanies the fulfilment of our nature as human beings. It is based upon the experience of one’s own identity as a being of worth and dignity.”

Joy is, then, a consequence of the experience of the fullness of our human dignity – and the dignity of the human person is grounded in the Gospel and is the root of all the Church has to say on every social and moral issue.

The final document of the Second Vatican Council, the Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the Modern World, begins with the words Gaudium et Spes – Joy and Hope. This is, I believe both important and helpful, since the two are inextricably linked. What is more, Hope is one of the Evangelical Virtues, along with Faith and Love.

Christian Joy is the consequence of Hope and the recognition of our Human Dignity. When we

reflect upon the needs of society and, in particular, those who live with the pain of difficulties in mental health, we will recognise that the loss of Human Dignity and the loss of Hope are very often present. Enabling the person to rediscover their dignity and be open once again to the gift of Hope will be transformative.

This right understanding of Human Dignity, Joy and Hope is grounded in the Gospel Message – the Evangelii Gaudium that is the subject of Pope Francis’ Encyclical. The response to the Gospel requires, very clearly in the Holy Father’s understanding, action:

“Let us try a little harder to take the first step and to become involved. The Lord gets involved and he involves his disciples, as he kneels to wash their feet. He tells his disciples: ‘You will be blessed if you do this.’ (Jn. 13:17) An evangelizing community gets involved by word and deed in people’s daily lives.”

It is in this same paragraph of the Encyclical that we find the now famous phrase:

“Evangelizers thus take on the “smell of the sheep” and the sheep are willing to hear their voice.”

This requires, it seems to me, more than doing. At a recent Conference for Prison Chaplains, the subject of care for the street-dweller came up in one of the sessions. The suggestion was made that we are very good at dishing out sandwiches, but we are not always so good at sitting on the pavement and listening. In the contexts from which we have come to this gathering, that business of being with others is key. There is always the temptation to rush in, do something that makes us seem active and busy, and move on – perhaps with too much haste. The modern world encourages this and is something of which I know I am all too guilty. We are brilliant at being busy – but the path to the kind of Joy on which we are reflecting demands more. I will not get the “smell of the sheep” if I rush by the sheepfold, comment on the cuteness of the spring lambs and keep going.

I have to stop and spend time. This is a vital aspect of evangelization – and it is a vital part of our response to those living with Mental Health difficulties. We must spend time. Perhaps in this field of care especially, time is important, for most mental health issues cannot be dealt with quickly. Pope Francis again:

“Evangelization consists mostly of patience and disregard for constraints of time.”

The Holy Father then goes on to explore the Parable of the Sower – patience is needed and it is necessary to accept that not all the growth will be according to our plan:

“He or she finds a way to let the word take flesh in a particular situation and bear fruits of new life, however imperfect or incomplete these may appear.”

So, we must be careful not to impose our own agenda on others. I will desire what is right for the other, I will desire health and wholeness for that person – but it will be a slightly different health and wholeness from my own, for the other is not me and I am not them. The key here is that I must desire what is God’s will for the other.

What Pope Francis says about Evangelisation applies perfectly to any pastoral encounter: the need to walk alongside the other as they discover their dignity as a human being – only possible through the wonder of the Gospel message; to be a living example of true Joy, that the other may discover it for themselves; to walk alongside the other as they discover the person they are meant to be and to find true wholeness in the one who is “the Way, the Truth and the Life”; to be with them as they find “Life to the Full”. Patience and time are needed for this journey. We must allow for the occasional diversion, even a blind alley or two, along the way. Being with the person in the midst of their struggle and not being tempted to look for a quick-fix: this is a way that will demand very great perseverance for both accompanier and accompanied.

Bishop Richard Moth
St. Mary’s University, 6th June 2015



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Please return your donation in an envelope to The Catholic Children's Society (Westminster), St Charles Square, London, W10 6EJ. Alternatively, please call us on 020 8969 5305 to make your donation or log on to www.cathchild.org.uk

**Submitting copy
for next issue**

The deadline for articles and photos for the next edition of the Catholic Mother is 4 November 2015.
Please send copy to
Ann Jones, Features Editor, at
catholic.mother@yahoo.co.uk. Thank you.

NOTTINGHAM

Enrolment

Mrs. Monica Mitchell was enrolled by Parish Priest Fr. Stephen Foster during May Devotions at St Mary's and John Bosco Parish, South Leicester. A shared table allowed members from several local parishes to meet informally. We wish Monica well in the UCM.



New member enrolled



Members at the AGM

AGM

Mothers' Union meeting

As the Nottingham Diocesan President of the Union of Catholic Mothers, I was invited to attend the Mothers' Union, Diocese of Southwell & Nottinghamshire (Province of York) Civic reception on Thursday 25th June, together with the evening service held in St Mary's church, Lace Market in Nottingham.

This coincided with their General Meeting which on day two was held in Southwell Minister. Day one was both relaxed and informative. We were enlightened as to the work done abroad by the Mothers' Union, especially towards helping the ladies in general with their plight against the poverty in their particular areas. All the speakers were very enthusiastic and each gave their own account and experience within the Union. The retiring officers were each given a bow and arrow and a Robin Hood hat which caused some light hearted comments from the floor.

It has to be said that a large number of gentlemen also work very hard for the Mother's Union in supporting their own wives as well as their own Diocesan work.

The objectives of the Mothers' Union are:

- "to Uphold Christ's teaching on the nature of marriage and promote a wider understanding"
- "to encourage parents to bring up their children in the faith and life of the church"
- "To maintain a worldwide fellowship of Christians, united in prayer, worship and service"
- "To promote conditions in society favourable to stable family life and the protection of children"
- "to help those whose family life has met with adversity".

The real highlight of the day for me was to visit St Barnabas Cathedral, where Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament was in Progress, followed by The Rosary and later by Holy Mass, after which I was able to pay my respects to some of the former Bishops laid to rest within the crypt. Of course the 8th Bishop was Bishop James McGuinness whom I remember fondly with pilgrimages to Lourdes and visits within our diocese. Then his predecessor the 7th Bishop Edward Ellis, by whom I was confirmed on 7th August 1948.

A very long day but very rewarding!

Pauline Hallam, Diocesan President



Nan Costello honoured for many years of faithful service

In Nottingham, foundations are so widespread the committee try to travel around to the outskirts of the Diocese for the AGM. This year we enjoyed the hospitality of the Holy Spirit/St Norbert UCM. After the usual reports members were told of the letter sent to the National Committee by Terri Coombs, a previous National Secretary, to be discussed in each foundation. Whatever the outcome, I believe that if you were to ask the membership how they had benefitted from belonging to the UCM, most would say that the fellowship and Spiritual Support that they had received and the friendships formed were some of the most valuable and cherished happenings of their lives.

Finally we learned that Nan Costello of Holy Cross Whitwick had resigned from her post as Diocesan Secretary after many years of faithful service to the Diocese. She has also held the offices of President and Diocesan Treasurer as well as working tirelessly for the good of her Parish. We wish her well in her retirement.

The AGM was held in the morning and after Mass members were able to spend the afternoon visiting a nearby Garden Centre and Shopping Arcade.

Frances Goodman, Diocesan Media Officer

Triennial National Mass

The day started fair with pick up in Loughborough and a trip to the Mother of God in Leicester to meet the coach. A prompt start was made at 9:30am, and an uneventful journey took us to Salford and the Cathedral. Time to take our seats and 'people watch' looking for people they know or just taking it all in. Time to prepare ourselves for the Mass.

The procession into the Cathedral was impressive with the National President, other officers and the celebrants, including two Bishops! Bishop John Arnold being joined by Bishop Brain and four other priests.

The singing was wonderful (Father Philip would have been delighted), led by a choir in the transept, the roof was certainly raised. After communion we delighted listening to a soloist singing Panis Angelicus.

At the end of Mass the National President who was standing down received a Papal Medal for her service to the UCM. She also gave a cheque of £14,000+ to Save the Children, the charity she has supported during her time at the helm.

After the procession out it was time to meet and greet those members from around the country we knew. First in line was Bishop John. We managed to get a couple of photos of him with us Loughborough ladies.

We had a good look round the Cathedral which is truly beautiful and will look even more wonderful when the renovation work is completed.

Then onto the coach in search of our fish & chip tea at Harry Ramdens, delicious! Set us up for the trip home.

Jean Lopez Lopez, St Mary's Loughborough Foundation

EAST ANGLIA

Quiet Day

East Anglia Diocese held their annual Quiet Day at Poringland in April. Our first speaker was Fr Russell Frost from Ipswich, who has the distinction of being on both shrines in Walsingham. Using the hymn, "at the name of Jesus", he linked each line and verse to the story of Jesus' life and death. He ended his session with the Via Lucis, the way of the Resurrection.

Our afternoon speaker was Eamon McGrath from Age UK Norfolk, who gave us an interesting talk on the working of Age UK, including their work with Admiral Nurses and Dementia Care.

Marguerite Wayling, Diocesan Secretary



St Rita's Day Mass

Set in beautiful grounds in the Devon countryside is St Rita's Retreat and Conference Centre at Honiton, where the feast of St Rita on 22 May is commemorated each year in a very special way.

This year a group of over 20 UCM members and friends accompanied by Fr Robin Ellis travelled by coach from Exmouth to take part in the celebrations.

Mass was celebrated at 12 noon in a marquee decked with roses. Crowds from far and wide began arriving during the middle of the morning when refreshments were available and by 11.45 there was barely a seat to be found in the marquee. During the Mass the hundreds of roses which adorn the altar were blessed for distribution to the sick later on and it has been claimed that rose petals blessed on St Rita's feast day have curative qualities.

After Mass we all enjoyed our picnic lunches and had an opportunity to visit the book shop to buy cards and relics or to spend a quiet time in the

chapel. At 3.30 we returned to the marquee for Benediction and to collect roses to take home to some of our sick members. After saying farewell it was back to our coach, tired but elated after a wonderful day.

Here in Honiton you will find the only shrine dedicated to St Rita in England and there is a Chapel which has beautiful stained glass windows made by the monks at Buckfast Abbey. In a display cabinet there is an authenticated relic of this famous saint; a woman of great faith who became an Augustinian nun in the convent at Cascia following the death of her husband. It is understood that as she was dying, she asked for a rose from her garden in winter - not the rose growing season - and one was found and brought to her and her room was filled with the scent of roses. Some of us took the opportunity to buy a rose bush named in her honour for our own gardens.

Irene Walker, Exmouth Foundation

CLIFTON

"Do not miss an opportunity"

Thirty members from Clifton Diocese attended a day of recollection at St Joseph's Home in Bristol. Our hosts were the Little Sisters of the Poor who gave us a warm welcome and provided refreshments.

After a period of meeting up with new and old friends from around the diocese we had our first talk of the day. This was given by Mgr Canon Gabriel Leyden who based his talk on the writings of Pope Francis. He also referred to St Jeanne Jugan (the patron saint of the Little Sisters of the Poor) who "took on the challenges of her time and gained followers not by proselytising but by attraction". He urged that we speak of our faith when in contact with other people - "do not miss an opportunity" - and stressed the importance of a regular prayer life.

We then had a period of silence spent in either the chapel or the beautiful gardens followed by Mass. After lunch Pat Kissane read the letter to the laity from the Bishops of England and Wales on the forthcoming general election.

Our final talk of the day from Canon Matthew Hayes was also thought provoking:

If we just sit at Mass and watch what is going on, we are merely spectators, we are not involved. We should actively offer ourselves to God - "Take my life, you gave it to me". The great Amen is intended to be the trumpeting of an elephant - not the whisper of a mouse - "I accept, I approve, I agree".

After this final talk our day ended and we went our separate ways enriched by the experience.

Moira Halls, Sacred Heart Foundation, Westbury-on-Trym



Sacred Heart Foundation

Bowood House

One sunny Wednesday in June the Sacred Heart Foundation plus some husbands and friends visited Bowood House in Wiltshire - the seat of the Marquess of Lansdown.

The house was designed by Robert Adam in the seventeenth century and contains a chapel which is still in

use today. We had ample time to appreciate the house and relax in the gardens and parkland. Upon returning to our parish we had a photo taken under the statue of the Sacred Heart.

Moira Halls, Sacred Heart Foundation, Westbury-on-Trym

50 year certificate awarded

The Diocesan Secretary Cecilia Thorley was recently presented with her 50 year membership certificate at Clifton Diocese Quarterly Mass at St Joseph's Church, Portishead. The presentation was made by Fr Tom Dubois at the end of Mass. We went on to have a business meeting in their community room, when Anne-Marie Sparrow presented Pat Uglov with the Diocesan President's badge. As the speaker had not been able to attend, Monica Ovel stepped in to give an excellent slide show about her visit to China.

Cecilia Thorley, Diocesan Secretary



Cecilia Thorley

ST FRANCIS LEPROSY GUILD

This year The St Francis Leprosy Guild celebrates its 120th anniversary. The Guild is the only UK Catholic leprosy charity supporting over 80 centres in Africa, Asia and South America. There are many faces of leprosy.





Please remember those who suffer from leprosy, their families and those who care for them

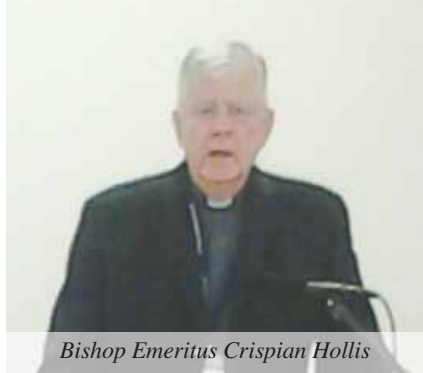
St Francis Leprosy Guild, 73 St Charles Square, London W10 6EJ
 Tel 020 8969 1345 enquiries@stfrancisleprosy.org
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National Council

National Council was held at the Hayes Conference Centre, Swanwick, from the 11 May - 13 May, and was hosted by Portsmouth Diocese, with the liturgy for the Masses and Night Prayers prepared by Shrewsbury Diocese.



Bishop Emeritus Crispian Hollis

National Councils are always filled with long, busy days. They are a unique UCM mix of fun, spirituality and business. We catch up with friends from around the country, learn about issues that concern us, hear what our

National Officers do on our behalf and much more. This year had several interesting speakers, lively members' debate, and a new President inaugurated. For many members spiritual celebrations are the most special part, with several celebrations of Mass and the opportunity for Benediction. The tea, cake and plentiful food provided by the wonderful staff at the Hayes Conference Centre sustain members throughout the three days.

National Council 2015 began with Holy Mass, led by our new Spiritual Advisor Bishop Alan Williams and concelebrated with visiting Clergy.

President Maureen Mayers welcomed members and guests, and then introduced our first speaker, Kevin Lonergan from Galloway's Society for the Blind.

Kevin was a humorous speaker and had the Mothers and guests in fits of laughter with his funny short stories. He also, on a more serious and practical note, talked about loss of sight, diminishing sight and blindness, and the various reasons why this can happen. Kevin gave us practical hints and tips on how to be helpful with people with sight problems or blindness. This was followed by a practical demonstration

using various glasses to depict different conditions, for example Macular Degeneration. Sheila Godley very kindly and bravely modelled these for us and also allowed Kevin to demonstrate how to "guide" people when walking and generally getting on with everyday life. He also showed and demonstrated various gadgets that can be helpful for people with sight problems or blindness.

Finally Kevin emphasised that it is important to "See the person first, don't make assumptions. Don't see the disability, see the person".

Following this talk Council business continued with Reports from the National Officers, and a closed session for members.

Bishop Crispian Hollis, Bishop Emeritus of Portsmouth gave a short talk on Sharing of Faith and Communications. He spoke of how retiring has freed him to speak of his own personal faith as well as "The Faith".

On the last evening, the ever popular "Social" was held with the entertainment organised by Portsmouth. A trio of Ukelele players gave a variety of music and songs, with Father Kevan from Lancaster occasionally

joining in with his accordion there was plenty of enthusiasm and dancing by the mothers and visiting priests. The ukulele group commented later that they thoroughly enjoyed our event and would love to be asked to entertain again.

The AGM saw the stepping down of National Officers who had served their term of Office, and we welcomed Mary Piper and Anne Emblem as our new Vice Presidents and Brigid Hegarty as the new Welfare Officer. Maureen gave her farewell speech and thanked the retiring officers for their hard work and commitment, and for all the support she had received during her term as President of the Union of Catholic Mothers.

Val Ward was inaugurated as the new National President during the closing Mass accompanied by her husband John and eldest daughter Deborah. It was appropriate as it is the support of our families which makes us able to be active members of the UCM.

As always, the National Council concludes with a flurry of farewells and thanks by members, who grab packed lunches before departing via planes, train and automobiles.

Caroline Mills, National Media Officer



New National President Val Ward (centre, holding flowers) with her fellow members from Shrewsbury Diocese.



Bishop Alan William and Maureen Mayers

First Timer at National Council

For two of us, it was our first visit to Swanwick, near Derby. Unfortunately, because we live so far away, we missed the 3pm Mass, but were greeted by ladies acting as Host for the three days, all from Portsmouth Diocese and wearing identifying red sashes, who then showed us to our rooms.

Meeting up with everyone over tea and biscuits was followed by the first session, with a warm welcome by our retiring National President, Maureen Mayers, who invited each Diocesan President to introduce herself and the other Diocesan members with her. Minutes of the last National Council were dealt with and some National Officers' Reports were given, and then it was time for our invited Speaker.

We were entertained by Kevin Lonergan's talk, and found it particularly interesting as we'd quite recently had two women from our local "Talking Newspapers" at our Thursday afternoon meeting. One of our own members uses many of the gadgets Kevin showed us and receives her memory stick each week full of local news and useful information. A grand raffle was held during the social evening on Tuesday, which raised a very good sum for Galloways Society for the Blind.

Dinner was a friendly, noisy hour in the large dining room, then we returned to the Conference Room for Session 2. Afterwards we made our way up to the large brick-interior Chapel for Benediction, and then it was free time to chat some more, read our Annual Reports, and retire for the night.

I thought that the cereals, juices, croissants, fresh fruit and coffee available was our breakfast, until trolleys of cooked food were wheeled in to fill us up for the morning ahead! All three meals were cooked and proper puddings served at lunch and dinner, though fresh fruit was also an alternative each time. As well as being so well fed, the grounds at the Swanwick Conference Centre are very well cared for, and the bedding plants were lovely. Pre-breakfast walks round the two small lakes gave us some quiet time for reflection, and greeting others doing the same.

Tuesday was a day of four more sessions, punctuated by coffee and biscuits; tea and cakes, which of course you didn't have to eat! All the National Officers gave their reports of what they had been doing during the year on our behalf, with such a variety of topics covered - I

was amazed at how much the UCM is involved with, especially regarding Christian and women's issues. Mass had been celebrated before lunch, and we finished our business with Night Prayers before dinner.

Then the Social Evening began and 'work clothes' were replaced by dresses, pretty tops, and evening shoes. A three-piece ukulele band had been booked for the first part of the evening, and then the "Rocking Rev" and his accordion took over. We decided to return to our rooms just before 11 o'clock, as we had another long day ahead of us, but I believe the dancing carried on until midnight! Our Officers showed us that they were just as good at having fun as they are at serving us Nationally!

We woke to a soft breeze and blue sky on Wednesday - and another good breakfast. Our Annual General Meeting began with Prayers; the Minutes and Annual Report were discussed and adopted; we voted for Mrs Irene Mitchell and Mrs Angela (or Angie to most) Higginson, our National Secretary and National Treasurer respectively, to continue in post; retiring Officers were thanked and wished well, given cards etc; and new Officers were presented to us and welcomed by Maureen. Her closing remarks were very well received by everyone, and she was thanked most warmly for her three excellent years of service as our National President, with a presentation of cards and flowers - and quite a few hugs! To close the AGM, a short 'vote of thanks' was given by each of the attending Diocesan Spiritual Advisors, which were thoughtful, amusing and appreciated.

Mass at midday was celebrated and after the Gospel, our new National President, Mrs Val Ward, was inaugurated. Her husband and eldest daughter were able to be present and photos were taken in the lovely Chapel, more flowers presented, and it was a moving occasion.

Lunch followed and then goodbyes were said as taxis started to arrive to collect groups for their return journeys.

Thank you to the National Officers for making us feel part of the family of UCM, and to the friends we made with those from other Diocese, and to the Portsmouth ladies for looking after us, and for our gifts of commemorative bookmarks. We will hope to do as well in 2017, when it is Plymouth Diocese's turn.

Diana Norman, Plymouth Diocesan President



Maureen Mayers and Father Kevan



New National President Val Ward (centre) with daughter Deborah and husband John

Thoughts on National Council



Members from Portsmouth, who were the host diocese for this year's National Council.

A total of 22 members attended National Council from Portsmouth Diocese. There was a particular reason this year for more members from our diocese to attend, as we were hosting Council for the first time at Hayes Conference Centre. We were not really sure what we had let ourselves in for so were very pleased to have such good support from our members.

Last year when we attended National Council Irene Mitchell, National Secretary made an appeal to dioceses to host in 2015. In years gone by National Council was held at many different venues in different dioceses who automatically hosted the event. Since we now reside at the Hayes every year it has become the norm for dioceses to take it in turn to host Council. Portsmouth had not hosted Council since 1992 when it was held in Henley on Thames. In my innocence I thought it was about time Portsmouth took on this duty, not having any idea what it entailed and so persuaded Pat Kemp, President, to volunteer for 2015. I don't think she has forgiven me yet! At the end of Council Irene handed me a folder that had a few sheets of paper about the Hayes Conference Centre in it and said she would be in touch! There was one sheet in the folder which I read about twenty times!

What became obvious was that we would not be able to manage to host National Council with just the usual delegation of three officers, a delegate and our Spiritual Director. We looked at our funds and decided that we would use some of our Conference fund to pay for extra members to attend Council. As it happened after making our appeal we had far more volunteers than expected and the majority of those attending Council paid for themselves. We were pleased to have our delegate Norah Gregson from Guernsey and we were able to help finance another member from the Island, Moira Hearne.

During the succeeding months we put our minds to what we would need to do and who was the best person to do it. Pat was quite nervous at the thought of having to get up and speak before the commencement of Council but she managed to put that behind and did a grand job of leading her team. We had a meeting in January of those attending Council and were able to allocate jobs and sort out any problems. Those of us who attended the National President's Mass in Salford had a get together to make sure all was in place.

We arrived at the Hayes about 10.30 on the morning of 11 May and made our way to Lakeside where Reception was to be set up. We had Carol Willis with us who had undertaken to arrange two vases of flowers and she was able to get these done before the crowds arrived. We sat and relaxed greeting members as they arrived and had the inevitable wait for the room keys to arrive. At 2pm a man appeared with two big boxes which were planted in front of us and opened. We were not able to see round them but could hear the crowd! After that it seemed to be chaos, but it really went very quickly and at 2:45pm there were only a few keys left. Everyone went off to Mass and I stayed behind with Nicola, Pat's daughter to greet the late comers.

The ladies who had jobs in the conference hall had everything under control and Pat was ready with her first announcements. We were off and so far nothing had gone wrong. And so it went on. We had planned it well and everyone seemed to be happy. As Portsmouth was hosting, National Committee had invited our Bishop, Phillip Egan to attend. Unfortunately he was not able to come so we invited our Emeritus Bishop Crispian Hollis.

I have to admit that what worried me most about hosting the conference was that we had to provide the entertainment for the Tuesday evening and at our first meeting none of us had any idea of what we were going to do, though we soon came round to the idea that it was worth the money to pay someone to entertain us rather than do it ourselves. We are very grateful to Ann Jones who found us a ukelele band and they were a great success getting everyone up to dance. They, along with Father Kevan, from Lancaster who played his accordion, gave everyone a very enjoyable evening.

We all enjoyed hosting Council and our advice to those dioceses who may not have experienced it before is that when they undertake to host they make sure they have enough personnel to cover all tasks and prepare beforehand. Make sure you meet together with your team before you arrive at Council.

Anne Lambkin, Diocesan Secretary

Poor Sight – We're Here to Help

At National Council we invited Kevin Lonergan from Galloway's to share a little more of their work and how they support people with sight loss. UCM members will be aware that an audio edition of the Catholic Mother is available free of charge thanks to our friends at Galloway's Society for the Blind in Preston.

Galloway's is an organisation that is based in Lancashire and whilst most of its services cover that area, a number of services are provided across the country – including the audio edition of the Catholic Mother.

Kevin thanked the Union of Catholic Mothers for their invitation and very warm welcome and wanted to share some helpful information on how we could help people with poor vision, before demonstrating a simple guiding technique and demonstrating some of the pieces of equipment that can help people in their everyday lives.

Macular Degeneration is the biggest cause of sight loss in the country. It is an age related eye condition affecting the central vision, with the majority of people retaining some residual vision.

Kevin explained that it is a very traumatic experience for people and that sight loss can be almost likened to a bereavement where we "lose something". It is important to help people focus on the sight they still have and enable people to make the best use of it. This can be accomplished through good and appropriate:

- Lighting
- Contrast
- Large print (16-18 point)
- Simple systems to manage everyday tasks.
- Correct use of magnifiers, low vision and daily living equipment.

Most people are unaware of the help that is available to them and Kevin encouraged members to discuss sight loss at their foundation meetings in case there were members who came to meetings (or could no longer attend) that may need support. Kevin will be happy to advise and put people in touch with their local organisation.

Galloway's do audio editions of the Catholic Universe, Lancaster and Liverpool Diocesan newspapers/magazines, the Union of Catholic Mother's Newspaper and a monthly popular daily devotional – Bible Alive – all free of charge.

There are a number of other Catholic Organisations (listed below) that can help and be contacted independently. Here are their details.

- Catholic Radio <http://www.ewtn.com/radio/>
- <http://www.heavensroadfm.com/>
- <http://www.universecatholicradio.com/>
- Fr Robert Barron - <http://www.wordonfire.org>

If you are interested in learning more contact Kevin at Howick House, Howick Park Avenue, Penwortham, Preston, PR1 0LS, telephone (01772) 744148 or email kevin.lonergan@galloways.org.uk.

Caroline Mills, National Media Officer and Kevin Lonergan, Galloways



Kevin Lonergan



Kevin Lonergan demonstrating how to guide with volunteer Sheila Godley.



If you know someone who is unable to read the Catholic Mother, please contact Caroline Mills at caroline_mills@btinternet.com to order your free copy.

Some thoughts on The Call, The Journey and The Mission

Holy Rood Foundation Barnsley discussed this document and came up with the following thoughts in response to the questions posed.

1. What are the joys and hopes of marriage and family life today?

All those who have enjoyed long and happy marriages want this for their families - contented and settled relationships such as they have experienced. For those who have not been so blessed, it must be even more important to see their families secure and happy. Though this is not always apparent today, those entering into marriage need a firm determination that they will make it work; this continuing effort brings many rewards and blessings which are not always immediately apparent, but which develop over the years with a maturing relationship.

2. What are your struggles and fears of marriage and family life today?

All struggles - personal, financial, health issues and relationships - affect a family and all the individuals in it, either helping them to become stronger and more mature or widening the cracks until there comes a final breakdown. We feel that attitudes towards marriage are changing radically, leaving the older ones amongst us unable and unwilling to understand or accept the viewpoints of younger generations. Marriage break -up is traumatic for all concerned, especially for children who are frequently left confused, with feelings of guilt and sharply divided loyalties.

3. How can we better understand marriage as a vocation?

We must be clear that marriage IS a vocation, which is something very different from a career or a lifestyle choice. A career comes with learning, acquiring qualifications, promotions and, hopefully, security. In a marriage you hope and pray for a happy-ever-after life with a loving and supportive partner, a happy family and a nice home. You may end up with all of these, some of them - or none, because marriage is a leap in the dark and there are many issues which have a bearing on its progress. Looking on marriage as a vocation, couple will travel its road with love, prayer and mutual support, not regarding it as a career or contract of employment which can be changed or terminated at will.

4. How does your marriage enrich you?

At its best a marriage enriches those in it with joy, peace and happiness, hopefully in a loving family, with mutual support in all the bad times and enjoying and celebrating the good times, each understanding the other's needs and endeavouring to put them before one's own. Children are enriched by the parents' example, seeing before them a lifestyle which they can aim to replicate in their own relationships.

5. How does your family life enrich those around you?

The example of a loving, happy and supportive family cannot fail to enrich those with whom it comes into contact. And this family is not only the "nuclear" family of mum, dad and kids, but also the wider family of brothers, sisters, uncles, aunts and grandparents, as well as the church community which can offer many of these graces to those who might otherwise be deprived of them.

6. In what way through the abiding presence of God is your family "salt of the earth and light of the world" and a place of and for handing on our faith?

A strong and abiding faith to hand on to one's children is something close to the hearts of all Catholic parents. Sometimes the children accept the gift of faith, and sometimes they don't; there are no hard and fast rules, and often parents feel guilt if their children do not choose to follow their path. However, loving example rather than confrontation is often felt to be the most effective way to go. There is also a feeling that faith can be spread through example in the wider community: taking part by appointment or volunteering roles, performing such services as well as possible for the good of others and, most importantly, being known and respected in these roles as a person of integrity AND as a Catholic. If our church encourages us to reach out to the wider community as a result of our faith, some of that faith may "rub off" on those with whom it comes into contact. At the very least, it will bring more knowledge and understanding of the Catholic faith to a diverse range of people, and possibly motivate some of them to enquire more deeply into the faith.

M.Galvin, Secretary, Holy Rood Foundation, Barnsley, Hallam Diocese

LIVERPOOL

Enrolments and Long Service

Right: Eight new members enrolled: Rose Barnes, Margaret Beckingham, Lyn Burgess, Michelle Brunskill, Karen Jones, Karen Williamson and Pat Illingworth. Joan Brown and Moira Hunt from St. Joseph's Penketh.

Below: 17 members from St Jerome's Formby were presented with 40 year certificates.



Dignity in Care nomination

Many UCM Foundations in Liverpool support a wonderful charity called Nugent Care, which was founded on the principles of Fr James Nugent (1822-1905) who did great work with homeless and orphaned children in the poorest parts of the city in the 1800s. The charity this year celebrates its 130th anniversary. It goes from strength to strength covering many aspects of welfare work such as adoption, children's homes, adult care services and support for community groups across the Diocese. This year Nugent Care have nominated Holy Rosary UCM Foundation for a "Dignity in Care" award for the extra-special help they have given over the years. We wish Holy Rosary every success with their nomination for this award.



At annual Mass: Angela Moore, Fr David Potter, Margaret Kerbey, Bishop Tom Williams, Kate Moss.

UCM Annual Mass

The elegant ladies in the photograph are the Liverpool Archdiocesan Committee attending the UCM annual Mass at the Metropolitan Cathedral on Wednesday 10th June. The Mass was celebrated by Bishop Tom Williams. The procession before Mass was led by ladies carrying their Foundation banners which made a grand colourful effect. Members from thirty foundations came together with representatives from other Faith groups for this wonderful celebration.



St Joseph's, Penketh on retreat at St Joseph's Prayer Centre

A Visit to Palestine

St Margaret Mary's Foundation were privileged to have a talk and slide-show given by Emeritus Archbishop Patrick Kelly and parishioner James Finnegan (grandson of our Foundation Secretary), on their travels to the states of Israel and Palestine, on behalf of the Holy Land Co-ordination organisation. Their work includes assisting charities in the West Bank, visiting schools and projects in Gaza. Hearing the accounts of loss and dire poverty was harrowing, but the people also told of hope of building their lives anew. Our speakers asked us all to pray for peace and justice in the Holy Land. Our Lady Queen of Palestine, pray for us.

Madelaine McDonald, Diocesan Media Officer



St Margaret Mary's Knotty Ash; some of the members taking tea on their day out at Tatton Hall, Knutsford

EAST ANGLIA

New Treasurer elected

Dereham Foundation hosted the East Anglia Diocese Summer Meeting and Annual General Meeting.

Maria Taverna (Diocesan President) introduced Fr Denis Lloyd to the meeting and asked him to say a few words of introduction about himself, as this was his first meeting with us.

Fr Denys said he was pleased to be asked to be our new Chaplain and looked forward to future meetings and events. Before we got down to business Maria noted that the date of our meeting 30th May had coincided with the anniversary of Margaret Clitherow, one of the Yorkshire Martyrs. We then listened to the Diocesan Officers reports which were all very interesting, we heard reports on the National Study/Welfare Days and National Council, followed by reports from the Foundations.

Sadly two of our Foundations had closed. However, eight members from the two closed Foundations have become Independent Members. Many items were discussed at length including the Walsingham Pilgrimage, East Anglia Diocese being lead Diocese this year.

Our Diocesan Treasurer Elizabeth Howe asked to stand down after having done an extra year, and Anne Nicol from (Dereham Foundation) was nominated as our new Diocesan Treasurer. Diocesan President and Diocesan Secretary were re-elected.

Elizabeth Howe was thanked for all she done during her term of office and a presentation was made to her.

Beryl Stock, Diocesan Media Officer

Pat Grout Honoured by Queen

The Dereham foundation was delighted when Pat Grout and her husband Richard were invested in The Most Venerable Order of St John of Jerusalem. This is an order of chivalry and individuals are appointed by the queen. The award is for services rendered to the work of St John Ambulance and is a great honour. It is not given as recognition for years of service but for service over and above the norm. Pat and Richard received their award for over 25 years of dedicated work supporting the Royal Norfolk Show. They stay on site,

in their caravan, for the entire week of the show, and are available from set up to pull down time.

In addition, Pat who is a past president of the Foundation, is also a unit leader, trainer and assessor for St John Ambulance which requires considerable hours of work and study over the years.

The day of the investiture will always be remembered by them with pride, as an amazing day of pomp and ceremony surrounded by friends and colleagues from St John Ambulance.

Jeannette Harris, Secretary, Dereham Foundation

Costessey Foundation

At a recent Quiz and Chips evening we raised over £500 for our charities, "Lifeboats" and "Father Michael Hood of Zimbabwe. But that wasn't the end of our fundraising, at a Strawberry Tea we raised almost £200 for furniture in our new Garden Room

Beryl Stock, Diocesan Media Officer

Birthday celebrations

Dereham Foundation celebrated Kathleen Borthwick's 80th birthday at their May meeting with a card, cake and gift. She also received a UCM certificate for 40 years of membership.

Kath has been a stalwart of the Dereham foundation and over the years has held all the officers posts. She remembers back in 1975 when there wasn't a resident priest and the UCM met in the home of a different member every month.



Kathleen Borthwick

BIRMINGHAM



L to R Peggy Cook, Diocesan Secretary, our Catholic Womens Union guest, Angela Foster Diocesan President, Archbishop Bernard Longley

AGM

Birmingham Archdiocese held its AGM at the Thistle Hotel Birmingham. Mass was celebrated for us in St Chad's Cathedral by Archbishop Bernard Longley who then joined us for lunch after which he gave an inspirational speech. He also presented certificates to two very energetic members. Eleanor Mason has served as Archdiocesan secretary and Wolverhampton Section president and secretary. She continues to organise Wolverhampton Section's Advent retreats and healing services which are held at her church St Thomas of Canterbury Walsall. Sarah Lockett has just completed her term as Archdiocese Media Officer. She is also the Archdiocese's City Section president and president of her foundation St Francis Xavier, Oldbury. And this whilst holding down a full time job and caring for a young family.

Admiral Nurses

We were so impressed by the talk by an Admiral nurse at the National Study Days in March that we arranged for Sally Rylance, Admiral Nurses for Birmingham & Solihull NHS to speak to the Birmingham Archdiocese Study Day. The talk was just as interesting and inspiring as the one in March covering many of the same but also different issues. If any other UCM dioceses or foundations haven't heard of Admiral nurses please look to see if you have one in your

area. Admiral nurses differ from other services to people with dementia in that they concentrate on the carer rather than the sufferer, helping them not only with the practical problems of caring for someone with dementia but also addressing their emotional needs, which are so often overlooked.

Susan Martin

A birthday to remember

Rebekah Hinsley has just celebrated her 21st birthday. She is very dear to the mothers of the Wolverhampton Section. She has been attending our events with her mother Ann for ten years, and often serves on the altar during our Masses. She has been an altar server in her own church St Mary's Cannock for fourteen years. Father Patrick Brennan presented her with a cake and flowers at St Mary's and 28 Wolverhampton section members did the same on Monday 27 April at a local Toby Carvery. Beck also had a party and theatre trip to see The Bodyguard. A birthday to remember!

Enrolment

Angela Smith was enrolled by President June Power and Fr Kuttikkatt. We are training Father well since he became our spiritual adviser in September.

Peggy Cook

Across the Years

In the spring I wrote a short article about the Centenary Book being compiled to celebrate 100 years of Holy Ghost Church, Exmouth, and the many UCM members that had contributed to it.

A UCM member in Bury, Lancashire, saw the article, and wrote to me describing how her husband, Alan, had come to Exmouth in 1942 as a boy. Although only here for ten years, he had always felt it was his second home. Alan served as an Altar boy in Holy Ghost church, and encouraged by the parish priest Father O'Malley, he learned to play the church organ. This led to a lifelong love of music and he "played anywhere and everywhere".

I liked the story so much that I wrote and asked for permission to include it in the book, and it is now in the "Times Remembered" section. I also read out the letter I had received at our next UCM meeting, and another member recalled Alan's parents and decided to get in touch with Alan's wife.

So the Catholic Mother connects members across years and miles.

The Centenary Book, Community and Spirit, is being launched in the parish on 19 July with a lunchtime reception and book signing.

Siobhan Canham, Editor, Exmouth Foundation

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PORTSMOUTH

Fundraising for children's hospice



St Colman's members at Naomi House

St Colman's Foundation raised £100 for Naomi House, a children's hospice. Four members were invited there to receive a copper leaf with St Colman's UCM engraved on the back and to place the leaf on the new 'Money Tree'. We are now planning to raise £500 so that we can place a silver leaf on the tree in the near future.

Present at the ceremony were new president Pauline Kaznowski, past president Pauline Webb, Treasurer Cathy Riley and Vera Thereisia.

50th anniversary celebrations

Members of The Union Of Catholic Mothers, St Columba's Bridgemary, Gosport are celebrating 50 years of active witness to Christian values of friendship, sharing gifts and supporting Christian marriage and family life. We give thanks to God for those who founded UCM in our parish in 1965 and those who continue to keep alive this same spirit of Catholic Faith today.

Certificates in recognition of loyal and devoted membership were presented by Diocesan President, Patricia Kemp to Vera Lock, President, Nora Batt, Ella Arendse, in their absence to Bernadette Foster and Mary Beeby, retired founder member.

Bernadette Foster, Bridgemary Foundation

Old Fashioned Beetle Drive

When I was elected President of the UCM in Cosham in February, I was literally thrown in at the deep end. I decided that whilst we would obviously continue to uphold UCM values we could also have fun. I proposed, at one meeting, that we have a good old fashioned Beetle Drive. Every member helped and we advertised it at Masses and in other churches and sold tickets whenever we could.

Then I went on holiday to Malaysia for two weeks, due back two days before the Beetle Drive but knowing that everything was under control.

Unfortunately, the day before the Beetle Drive I had to go to a family funeral and there was so much more to do. No pressure then! Everyone rallied round brilliantly. The day arrived and everyone turned up with their duly allocated items to set up the hall. "Where are the dice Pauline?" one member asked. "At home I replied!" Luckily I live near so I drove home, but could I find the dice. No! I then proceeded to raid every games box in the house (thank goodness for grandchildren) and rushed back to church, wondering where I had put the dice.

The doors opened and 43 people came, some with tickets but others paid on the door. Among the visitors were six members from Sacred Heart UCM Waterlooville. (Thank you ladies for your support.) We played six rounds and then broke for refreshments which were included in the ticket price. We then played another six rounds and what fun everyone had, the atmosphere was electric, filled with laughter and cries of "Someone must be cheating", but said in jest. The afternoon concluded with a well donated raffle. Everyone said they had a wonderful afternoon and could we have another one soon please. We raised £127.00 after expenses. Several children came (admittance free) and they thoroughly enjoyed it and their grandmother said they would only have been sitting at home on their I pads otherwise.

I can thoroughly recommend this as an event. Oh, and did I find the dice? Yes as soon as I got home I went straight to where I had hidden them!

Pauline Kaznowski, President of St Colman's Foundation



St James Foundation pilgrimage

Pilgrimage

St James, Reading Foundation made a pilgrimage to the Shrine of Our Lady of Caversham on 28 May 2015. The shrine has been in Caversham for nearly 1000 years with miracles there.

Father Paul welcomes pilgrims. If you are interested please telephone the parish office on 0118 9471787 or online by email at stanne@fmartin.plus.com. The parish are currently fundraising to restore the shrine and church.

Study Day

After a five hour drive from the National Study Days at Swanwick, the new diocesan Study Officer Patricia Palmer had to finalise her preparations for her first Diocesan Study Day. Fortunately, her husband Phil had remembered to buy the bread and fruit which was to be part of our lunch.

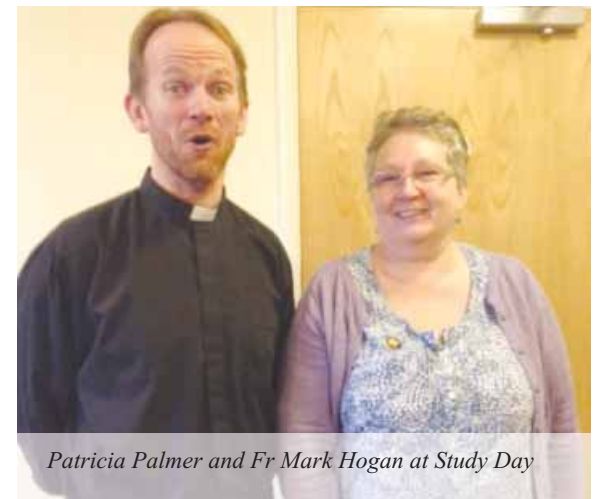
We were warmly greeted at St Joseph's in Basingstoke by two ladies from the parish who were UCM members before their foundation folded four years ago. Coffee and tea and biscuits were very welcome after our journey from different parts of the diocese.

The day began with a welcome from Tricia before she introduced Father Mark Hogan, parish priest of St Joseph's, who gave a very interesting insight into the New Evangelisation in the Catholic Church. He continued his talk in the afternoon, focusing on sharing our religion and experiences with others.

The afternoon session began with a report on the National Rest homes from which 17 people had been helped. £4314 had been spent and donations had raised £3193 towards this expenditure with other money coming from legacies.

The meeting ended with a thank you from Anne Lambkin to Tricia on her successful debut as Study Officer and arranging such a successful day, and a thank you to the ladies who had greeted us with coffee and were now preparing to send us on our way with tea and more biscuits.

Elizabeth Christian, Diocesan Media Officer



Patricia Palmer and Fr Mark Hogan at Study Day

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NORTHAMPTON

Retreat

Members of the Union of Catholic Mothers of the Northampton Diocese attended a Retreat at Turvey Abbey in February. We heard Mass along with 10 sisters who live in the convent next door who joined the four Abbey brothers. A lovely lunch was laid on after which we had a talk by Brother John on humility. There was a period of silence where we could visit the tiny chapel and walk in the beautiful grounds.

Margaret Bartram Northampton Diocese, St Columba's Foundation



Turvey Abbey Retreat



St Francis Assisi Foundation members from Northampton taking part in WUCWO Day



Kettering Foundation members from Northampton at the Triennial Mass in Salford Cathedral.

PLYMOUTH

AGM Report

Doesn't time fly! It hardly seems a year since we were all together at the last AGM.

This year being the 80th anniversary of the Plymouth Foundation we gathered at Plymouth Cathedral where Father Philip Austen, our Diocesan Spiritual Adviser, celebrated Mass at midday. Members from Exmouth had travelled by coach on a lovely sunny morning and were warmly greeted by the Plymouth ladies before Mass. One member had travelled all the way from Bournemouth, leaving at 8 o'clock in the morning!

Following Mass, we all enjoyed the wonderful buffet lunch provided by our Plymouth friends, before getting down to the

business part of the day.

The reports from the various foundations once again showed how active all our members are in their individual parishes - visiting the sick and housebound, Eucharistic ministry, reading, church cleaning, flower arranging and fund raising events.

After completing her term of office as President, Lorraine Richards handed over the reins to Diana Norman. Lorraine said how much she had enjoyed her time as President and especially her visit to Walsingham and to National Council.

Theresa Hearn was elected as Secretary and Eileen Gargan as Treasurer.

Irene Walker, Exmouth Foundation

MIDDLESBROUGH

Renewal of Commitment

Forty members and friends from St Aelred's Foundation, York, gathered at Thickett Priory to mark 55 years of the foundation. During Mass celebrated by Fr Bill Serplus, Diocesan Spiritual Adviser, members renewed their commitment.

There was a surprise presentation to Hilda Carney of a certificate and flowers to mark her 50 years of membership. During this time Hilda has held many positions and is now Diocesan President. After Mass we had a lovely supper and enjoyed the wonderful hospitality of the Carmelite Sisters. It was a very enjoyable and uplifting evening.

Elizabeth Dunn, Diocesan Media Officer

National Opportunity
THE NATIONAL PUBLIC SERVICE OFFICER

The duties of the Public Service Officer include:

- Attends National Committee Meetings.
- Attends National Council & Annual General Meeting and Diocesan Officers Meeting.
- Attends Conferences and meetings where issues affecting women, marriage & family life are discussed.
- Monitors and advises members on legislation affecting marriage and all areas of family life.
- Monitors and advises members on legislation that is contrary to the Church's teachings.
- Keeps a watching brief on social, ethical and medical matters which affect the well-being of all areas of family life.
- Raise awareness by encouraging members to lobby their Members of Parliament regarding legislation that affects Marriage and Family Life.
- Raise awareness by encouraging members to contact the respective civil authorities or agencies regarding issues that affect Marriage and Family Life.
- Represents The Union of Catholic Mothers on The National Board of Catholic Women.
- As part of the National Committee, the Public Service Officer may put forward some of the topics sourced from the information gained in the public sector for inclusion in Study Days.

For more detailed information in relation to the advertised post please contact the National Secretary email: ucmnatsec@yahoo.co.uk

All nomination/recommendation must be seconded and sent together with a copy of the candidate's CV

To the National Secretary: Mrs Irene Mitchell

No later than 31st October 2015

Dates for Diary

Diocesan Officers meeting

3 October 2015, St Chad's, Birmingham [All comments regarding UCM: The Way Forward to the National Secretary by 14 September.]

UCM Leeds Diocese 10th Annual Rosary Rally

24 October 1.45pm
St Annes Cathedral Leeds
All are welcome

National Study Days

Swanwick, Derbyshire
2016: 21-23 March
2017: 22-24 March
2018: 19-21 March

National Council

16-18 May 2016, Swanwick, Derbyshire
Liverpool hosting, Archbishop McMahon will attend on 17th May.

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SOUTHWARK

New members

New members for the Norbury foundation enrolled by Bishop Pat Lynch at Mass on 13th March. Fathers Deo Msahala and Paul Antwi-Boasiako also attended.

Sheppey Foundation visit the English "Sistine Chapel"

The Sheppey Foundation (with parishioners from SS Henry and Elizabeth Church, Sheerness), had a day out in Goring to see the Sistine Chapel of West Sussex. This is the Church of the English Martyrs, a tiny church tucked away in a side road in the small seaside town, just three miles from Worthing. We got lost finding it, and very nearly drove past it when we were in the right street, so small and unimposing is its exterior.

Entering into a small lobby there is still no indication of what was to come, but once through the door into the main body of the church we were rendered speechless by the vastness and accuracy of the ceiling. Michelangelo himself could have been proud of this work of love and devotion by one man, Gary Bevans, over a period of five and a half years. It is breathtaking.

It is a perfect two thirds copy of its more famous original, and is the only known, complete, hand painted replica of the Sistine Chapel ceiling. We were given a talk to introduce us to the great work and to answer all the hundreds of questions generated by such a massive undertaking in such a small church, which is still fully operational as the parish church and includes superb wooden carvings around the church, by the same hand.

After Mass was celebrated for us by our own Canon Frank Moran, we went on to Worthing for lunch, after which some of the party joined an official Council walking tour of the town. Our excellent guide took us round the town with a very interesting talk of its history from the 1800s. It coincided with Sussex Day which is held every year when the London taxi drivers bring down families for a day beside the seaside. The taxis were all lined up next to the pier, with the Town Crier welcoming visitors.

Everyone agreed it was a very memorable day, for which we thanked our Secretary and organiser of the outing, Mary Carr, and the blessing of lovely weather.

Mary van Dyke and Mary Carr



St Patrick's celebration at St Anthony's

St Anthony's Anerley

In celebration of St Patrick's Day the March meeting held a themed party with Irish food which included homemade Irish soda bread, Irish themed cookies, Irish Whisky cake and other goodies.

In the April meeting we celebrated Marie O'Gorman's (South West Area Officer) forthcoming 50th birthday. Marie was presented with champagne, flowers and we shared cupcakes.

A Coffee morning and cake sale was held on 10th May in aid of the Nepal Earthquake fund. A cheque for £140 was forwarded to Cafod.

L'Arche – a community for people with learning disabilities

The Union of Catholic Mothers kindly invited L'Arche to speak at the start of their Southwark Archdiocesan AGM. This was a wonderful opportunity for us to talk about L'Arche, and the work we do.

The L'Arche group included Fr David Standley (known to many in the audience) and Martin Higginson; a young man with a learning disability who lives in the London L'Arche community.

Martin shared his life story with the aid of an iPad and assistive technology [electronic equipment devised for people with disabilities]. He showed us pictures of his new home in L'Arche London and spoke movingly about his life; how he came to L'Arche and what he liked to do. Fr David spoke of the spirituality at the very heart of L'Arche, using everyday examples from the life of the L'Arche community in South London.

In L'Arche people with learning disabilities live with their assistants in family sized units. The name comes from the French word for Noah's Ark and L'Arche was founded in northern France by Jean Vanier, a Roman Catholic French Canadian layman.

In 1964 Jean visited a French psychiatric hospital and was appalled at the conditions. He subsequently invited two men with learning difficulties to come and live with him to share life together. This first house became the basic model from which L'Arche has grown. They are now a global charity which now has 141 communities in 38 countries. In L'Arche we live together, eat together, pray together. It is as close to family life as we can make it. There are communities from Belgium to Brazil, from Uganda to the United States. In the Archdiocese of Southwark we have communities in South London and in Canterbury.

The three fundamental principles

Firstly, people with learning disabilities are seen as individuals with a great deal to contribute to society through their lives and their gifts of the heart.

Secondly, L'Arche recognizes and celebrates a paradox: the fact that living alongside and supporting people with learning disabilities helps the "assistants" themselves to grow and to develop. Those who are perceived as "helpers" thus receive more than they give.

Thirdly, as a faith based organization, L'Arche is open to people of all religious faiths and those of none. At the same time, we believe that trust in God and mutual relationships lie at the heart of our journey together.

It was a privilege to talk to so many people at the Archdiocesan AGM. We would be delighted to show anyone around our community in South London. We are always looking for volunteers so please do pop into our shop in Norwood High Street to look around and get to know us better.

Article written by member of L'Arche

Long Service at Tolworth

Gerry Grehan presented these long term UCM membership certificate to these members of Tolworth Foundation.

Ann Groves, Monica Tett and Noreen Price. Kate Sage also will receive her certificate when her husband is better after his operation.

Rosemary Butcher, President Tolworth Foundation

UCM Prayer for New Members

Leader: 'Blessed is she who believed that the promise made her by the Lord would be fulfilled' (Luke 1: 45)

Leader:
Mary at Bethlehem
Mary at Nazareth
Mary at Cana
Woman of Faith
(From the Litany of Our Lady of Walsingham)

Response:
Dear Lord, in Mary our Mother you give us a model of one who believed fully in the promises made to her. Through this profound faith she lived in humility and simplicity, welcoming your Word in all joys and pains of motherhood. Grant that her example and prayers may draw ever more mothers to share in our fellowship of faith, so that, united under her motherly care, we may all live lives worthy of our calling. Give us the grace to rejoice in our own blessings that we, too, may serve, through our example and prayers, to draw others towards a richer appreciation of your redeeming love. Lord, may our Union bear such fruit that others who do not yet know your love, may be drawn to magnify your holy name.

We make our prayers through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you in the Unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever.

Amen

This prayer was read out at the National Council 2015. It was written by Fr Joseph Welch, son of Una McWeeney, East Anglia Diocese

Response:
Pray for all mothers
Pray for all families
Pray for all married couples
Keep us in mind

Celtic Benediction

Deep peace of the Running Wave to you.

Deep peace of the Flowing Air to you.

Deep peace of the Quiet Earth to you.

Deep peace of the Shining Stars to you.

Deep peace of the Son of Peace to you.

From the mass card of Bridgeen King, RIP

SALFORD

Fundraising and Socialising



Fundraising at St John Chorlton

The proceeds of this year's fundraising evening at St John's Chorlton Foundation of the evening were donated to Lynda and Peter Waine. They are members of our local parish of St Catherine's and for fourteen years they have been travelling out to Bolivia to do voluntary work. They have been heavily involved with an orphanage, which houses 166 children under the age of seven. Two women work through the day and night feeding and changing these needy little babies who have been abandoned, due to severe economic conditions. With the help of donations a bakery has been opened, giving much needed work to local people.

The best way to escape from poverty is through education and Lynda and Peter are always tirelessly fundraising to support various educational projects. On the evening we managed to make £700. We were wonderfully supported by members from other foundations in the Salford Diocese and by our next door neighbours at St Clements. There was an abundance of food for all and as usual proved a perfect opportunity to join old friends on the dance floor and catch up on all their news. The DJ for the evening was our Parish Priest, Father McMahon, who always kindly gives of his time on these occasions to provide the entertainment. Lynda and Peter were able to attend the event. They spoke about their inspirational work and were deeply grateful for our donation. We know it will be put to very good use.

Anne Wade

Afternoon Tea



Afternoon tea at St Luke's

An afternoon tea was held for ninety people to raise funds for St Ann's hospice, at St Luke's Foundation, Salford. We set about baking cakes and scones, making sandwiches, then we dressed the tables in our church hall with flowers, linen table cloths and our best china. Our guests included members from other foundations as well as people from our own parish and neighbouring churches. Fr John our parish priest joined us to show his support and went to chat to all the ladies. We gave our guests a free game of bingo, sold raffle tickets and had a cake stall.

As most members know Maureen Mayers received her Papal Award at the Triennial Mass. Although she is one of our members we still hadn't had the opportunity to congratulate her due to her commitments. This was our chance so we had a special congratulations cake made and presented her with a garden plant. Total raised in one afternoon was £647.90.

Pat Ellicott, President, St Luke's Irlam-o'th-heights

Lenten Retreat

It was a beautiful sunny morning as we boarded the minibus that would take us to St John Fisher's Kearsley, near Bolton. We arrived at the Schoenstatt Shrine after a very pleasant journey provided by Manchester Community Transport.

Father Bryan gave us a talk entitled "Love is our Mission, The Family Fully Alive". The themes he chose were from the Preparatory Catechesis for the VII World Meeting of Families, to be held in Philadelphia later in the year.

Father began with the topic of marriage and the roles of fatherhood and motherhood. He spoke of how our children perceive us and how we (fathers and mothers) are portrayed in the media and the effect, in many instances, this distorted portrayal may have on our children. He went on

to discuss happiness and our search for it and expanded on the significance of the family as the natural place for children to experience that happiness along with love and fulfilment. Equally important, is the very personal growth in spirit that parents experience in providing that happiness and love for their children within the family. Through the experience of love, children learn to love. Father quoted His Holiness Pope Benedict "Happiness has a name and a face, it's Jesus".

Father Bryan completed his talk expanding on the topics of families being the domestic church and the bedrock for the larger community, making them the school of humanity.

We then had time for Adoration in the beautiful Shrine and an opportunity for Confession. The day was completed by a very happy and Holy Mass and of course a cup of tea, then back on the minibus to head for home.

Cath Rutherford, Secretary, St Joseph's Reddish

A visit to Gorton Monastery



A very interesting afternoon was spent at Gorton Monastery, Manchester, by seven members of St Joseph's, Reddish. Following a decade of campaigning Gorton Monastery has been saved from ruin. They have done a sterling job of renovating this building. A total of £6.5 million was raised through generous public donations and major grants. The former church and friary, once listed by the World Monuments Fund as one of the top 100 endangered sites in the world, have now been lovingly restored.

The buildings are still owned by the same charity that began the campaign to save them in 1996, The Monastery of St Francis & Gorton Trust, and are operated on a day to day basis by its wholly owned trading company, The Monastery Manchester Ltd. This ensures that all proceeds from events held here are donated to the Trust and used to support the ongoing maintenance and conservation of this precious heritage site and into the wide range of education, skills, arts and health projects run by the Trust in the community. They are open to the public most Sundays from 12:00 until 4:00pm.

Margaret Postill, Diocesan Media Officer

Joining with the Parish – recruitment idea

A UCM Mass with the parish was a wonderful occasion at St Joseph's Reddish in May. Members met at church and processed down the aisle with the banner held high and placed beside the altar. Members read the readings, bidding prayers, offertory and special ministers. At the offertory we sang 'Flowers of the rarest' as flowers were placed on Our Lady's Altar. Fr Moss urged Mums to come along to a meeting and told them of all the good work we do. After Mass everyone was invited to the hall for tea and scones. I would like to thank everyone who was there and anyone who helped. It was fabulous and a wonderful way of letting the people of the parish know who the members of the UCM are.

Margaret Postill, Diocesan Media Officer

Railway Children

David Maidment was the speaker at Salford rally. He told us about a charity called "The Railway Children". David worked on the railways and is the founder of the charity. They provide protection for children with nowhere else to go and nobody to turn to.

Every year thousands of children across the UK, India and East Africa run away or are forced to leave homes that have become unbearable through poverty, abuse, violence and neglect. Reaching a child as soon as possible is crucial to getting to them before an abuser can, and before they become entrenched in street life.

Millions of children still live alone on the streets where they suffer abuse and exploitation. In the UK, society often denies their existence, and in other countries the problem is so prevalent that it has become 'normal'.

Take a look at their web site it is www.railwaychildren.org.uk.

Margaret Postill, Diocesan Media Officer

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WALSINGHAM WHISPERS

70th ANNUAL WALSINGHAM PILGRIMAGE - 2015

We are just back from our wonderful pilgrimage last week and what a fantastic pilgrimage it was – Our Lady of Walsingham perhaps did not quite look after us with the weather as well as she has done over the previous few years but she did her best and we managed to escape with just a few showers, one perhaps a little heavier than the rest! Nothing, however, could dampen our spirits and I am sure we all took away some beautiful memories of a wonderful Mass, two very moving processions, Service of Light and Benediction in the Abbey grounds. Our special thanks go to Bishop Alan Williams who joined us for the first time as our Ecclesiastical Advisor and to Bishop Alan Hopes from East Anglia for leading our pilgrimage, and to Fr Denys Lloyd and all the Clergy for joining us too. We also welcomed this year Bishop David Unwin, the Anglican Shine Director, who was able to join us for part of our pilgrimage and we thank him too. As well as Bishop Alan Williams being with us for the first time, we also welcomed our new National President, Val Ward, who gave her first address and what a thought provoking and inspiring address it was. There was also another first this year – Charlene Gabriel from Bermuda was enrolled into the UCM by Fr Michael Murray from Shrewsbury Diocese and our Mass was the first live Mass broadcast from Walsingham.

This year we welcomed approximately 721 members and of these 150 used the Abbey Link mobility coaches. As usual, our pilgrimage began with the Monday night 'Service of Light' in a packed Chapel of Reconciliation where we welcomed the statue of Our Lady of Walsingham which was carried in by the National Committee, the flowers surrounding it having been beautifully arranged by the Diocese of East Anglia. The National President lit our Blessed Candle and at the end of the Service

this was carried in procession to the Slipper Chapel where it burned throughout our pilgrimage. It was from this candle that all our candles were lit and carried in our torchlight procession. It was a wonderful sight to watch all the clergy and members as they began the torchlight procession along the Pilgrim Way to echoes of the reciting of the Joyful and Luminous Mysteries of the Rosary and the refrains of 'I'll sing a Hymn to Mary and Holy Virgin by God's decree'. As usual our procession came to an end with a short service in the Prayer Garden at the Pilgrim Bureau.

We began our final day with the Statue of Our Lady carried to the Altar steps by the Walsingham Sub-Committee. Bishops Alan Williams, Bishop Alan Hopes and 23 Clergy concelebrated Mass in the Shrine grounds. This year two Altar Servers from two of our Diocese served at the Mass. A packed lunch was then enjoyed in the grounds and there was a lot of catching up with new and old friends. Before long it was time for our members to join the mobility coaches in readiness for their Service of the Sick and Anointing in the Abbey grounds which was led this year by Fr Denys Lloyd, assisted by four other priests, and for our procession to begin down the Holy Mile and into the Abbey grounds. Again it was a silent procession which gave us much time and thoughts on our theme this year 'Mary, Mother of Silence' so, again, although separated in body, we were all joined together in prayer.

On arrival at the Abbey we were welcomed by our two new Vice Presidents Anne Emblem and Mary Piper. The various Diocesan petitions were read out and our National President led us in our UCM Prayer followed by her Address.

The Walsingham Sub-Committee would like to thank most sincerely all those who contributed in any way to the success of this



Left to right National Secretary Irene Mitchell, Shrewsbury Spiritual Advisor Fr. Michael Murray, New Member Charlene Gabriel, National President Val Ward and National Vice President Anne Emblem.

special 70th anniversary pilgrimage – it was lovely to see so many of you with your white roses. We thank especially Mary Taverna and Anne Emblem and all the members of the Diocese of East Anglia for their hard work during the year, ensuring a warm welcome on your arrival in Walsingham and again making sure no one was 'homeless'. We thank all our wonderful stewards; the Choir; the Knights of St Columba; the Norfolk Constabulary; our First Aiders and of course a very special thank you to the Rector and all the staff at the Shrine and the Pilgrim Bureau who work tirelessly with us during the pilgrimage and throughout the year to ensure a spiritual and prayerful occasion and also to everyone who offered

help on the day. Thank you too for all your cards and letters of 'thanks' received subsequently and for sending in your comments - which we really do appreciate.

Going forward now to 2016, our Lead Diocese will be Leeds and a reminder that all beds in the Pilgrim Bureau must be booked through their President, Mrs Pat Atha and her Co-ordinator.

Finally, thank you all for being with us and making it such a special occasion - not forgetting all those who were not able to be with us but joined us in prayer. God Bless you all.

Maureen, Angela, Elizabeth and Paddy
Walsingham Sub Committee

The Union of Catholic Mothers 70th Annual Pilgrimage to The National Shrine of Our Lady Walsingham

July 2015

'Mary, Mother of Silence'

Another memorable pilgrimage with so many 'firsts':

Bishop Alan Williams SM joined us for his first official role as our Ecclesiastical Advisor.

This was Mrs Val Ward's first duty as our National President at a UCM occasion.

Our Mass on Tuesday 7th July was the first live Mass screened at Walsingham.

Monsignor John Armitage presented a Novena of Masses to UCM to celebrate our 70th pilgrimage to Walsingham.

Charlene Gabriel from Bermuda was enrolled into The Union of Catholic Mothers; her story is:

Charlene was so excited at the thought of coming to Walsingham to join our pilgrimage and she said 'I have a story to share...yesterday morning (1st July) I discovered there was Union of Catholic Mothers Pilgrimage to Walsingham, and it was just after my daughter had accepted a job to return to Bermuda (from London where she lived the past 4 years (she is 25). Before she first came to London to live, I made a Pilgrimage to Walsingham to ask Our Lady to protect her faith while she lived in London. I wanted to go and thank Our Lady by making a pilgrimage before I left UK and before my daughter left the UK; can you imagine how God works, through his angels like you, my pilgrimage is possible. But even more astounding is that my daughter wants to start a catholic young professional group when she goes back to Bermuda, and I had decided that I would start a moms prayer group in our parish...so now I will be able to get materials from Irene and hope to start a UCM chapter in Bermuda. Isn't that great?' So if you are ever in Bermuda then do contact Charlene, you are sure to receive a very warm welcome.

A detailed account of our pilgrimage will feature in the next edition of The Catholic Mother.

Walsingham online

You can find more information on our Mass by going to www.Walsingham.org.uk

then - The Catholic Shrine of Our Lady

then - Latest News

then - UCM Anniversary Pilgrimage.

If you click on Walsingham Blog then you will see some photographs.

If you click on Walsingham Catholic TV then you will see our Mass.

Irene Mitchell, National Secretary

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